

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (cancelled).

2. (Currently amended). In combination with a housing of a module enclosing a plurality of elongated processing elements through which a contaminate-laden fluid is filtered; the improvement residing in: sealing means for establishing a sealed chamber within the module housing through which the contaminate-laden fluid is conducted externally of the processing elements; holding means for positioning the elongated processing elements within the sealed chamber in a bundled condition; spacer means for maintaining the bundled processing elements in laterally spaced relation to each other throughout within the sealed chamber through which the filtered fluid is laterally withdrawn as a cleansed portion of the contaminate-laden fluid; and The combination as defined in claim 1, including drain means on the housing for discharging said cleansed portion of the contaminate laden fluid from the sealed chamber in response to filtration by the elongated processing elements.

3. (Previously amended). The combination as defined in claim 2, wherein said sealing means includes: a pair of axially spaced seal rings in radially outer sealing contact with the module housing; and said holding means is retained within said seal rings for anchoring therein opposite end portions of the processing elements in the bundled condition.

4. (Previously amended). The combination as defined in claim 3, wherein said sealing means is assembled with the processing elements adjustably positioned therein by the holding means before bundling within bodies of epoxy resin subsequently cured under clamping pressure;

said holding means being thereby retained within the seal rings before assembly within the module housing.

5. (Original): The combination as defined in claim 4, wherein said contaminate laden fluid is oily bilgewater and the processing elements are filter membranes.

6. (Currently amended). The combination as defined in claim 1, wherein said sealing means is assembled with the processing elements adjustably positioned therein before bundling within bodies of epoxy resin subsequently cured under clamping pressure to form said holding means before assembly within the module housing.

7. (Original). The combination as defined in claim 2, wherein said contaminate laden fluid is oily bilgewater and the elongated elements are filter membranes.

8. (Previously added). In a method of processing a contaminate-laden fluid into a cleansed portion thereof within a module housing by filtration through membrane elements, the improvement residing in the steps of: positioning the membrane elements within the module housing in laterally spaced relation to each other throughout while extending between opposite axial ends thereof; conducting the contaminate-laden fluid through the module housing for axial flow passage therethrough so as to thereby undergo said filtration into the cleansed portion; and withdrawing the cleansed portion by lateral passage through the membrane elements to undergo said filtration without mixing thereof with the contaminate-laden fluid undergoing said axial flow passage through the module housing.